

TO THE POINT
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UNITED STATES

Playing more and more into Soviet hands

By Allan C Brownfeld

IN the US, many today hold the view that in the late Forties and Fifties Americans overestimated the aggressive intentions and subversive behaviour of the Soviet Union and its agents in the US. The view is widespread, in addition, that no real threat to the national security exists at the present time and, as a result, that it is entirely proper to dismantle the internal security apparatus which has been, many argue, a threat to civil liberties.

In an important new book *Self Destruct, Dismantling America's Internal Security* (Arlington House, 1979), Robert Morris takes sharp exception to these prevailing views. He believes that the Soviet Union, from the end of World War Two until today, has striven all too successfully to weaken the US, with a view to its ultimate destruction. He shows how the US, for a variety of reasons, has become a party to the on-going process of its own destruction.

Robert Morris is well qualified to tell this story. During World War Two he served as an officer in Naval Intelligence and in 1950 became chief counsel to the Senate Internal Security Sub-committee. It was largely the record he compiled as chief counsel that inspired the House of Delegates of the American Bar Association to commend the sub-committee for its work over the years. He has also been a judge in New York City, president of the University of Dallas and president and founder of the University of Plano.

In his foreword, William Rusher, publisher of *National Review*, writes: "Some people may choose to scoff at Morris's deep concern as dated or old-hat — but have they looked at the world around them? Since Morris last retired as chief counsel to the Internal Security Sub-committee in 1958, the Soviet Union has:

"Drawn at least abreast of the US as a military superpower.

"Established a spacious island base just 120 km off the coast of Florida.

"Come within inches of taking full control of Indonesia and Chile.

"Drawn India into its orbit.

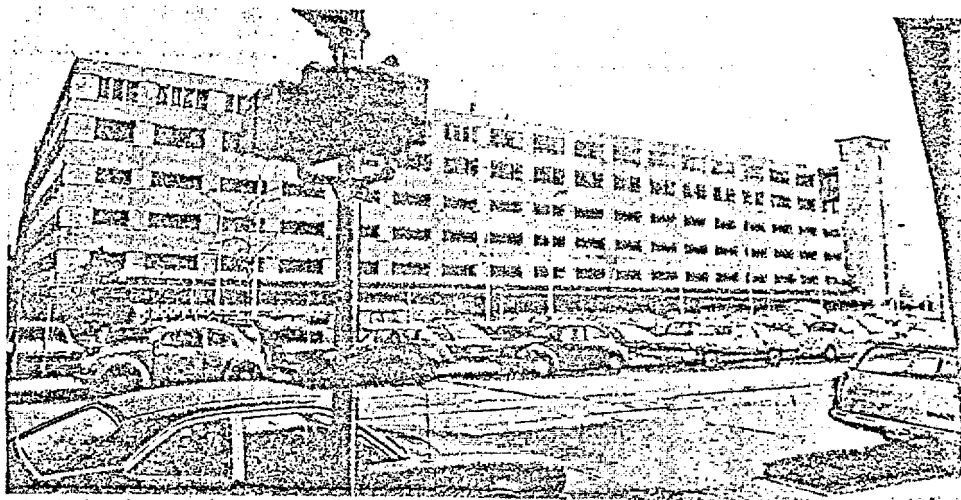
"Quarter-backed the communist conquest of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

"Erupted with permanent naval forces and bases into both the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean.

"Deployed at least 30000 surrogate Cuban troops on half-a-dozen fronts all over Africa — and nonetheless persuaded bemused Republican and Democratic administrations alike to believe it is sincere about wanting 'detente'. If what we have been witnessing is indeed a detente, wonder the Russians wait it!

Morris points out that, "Within the brief time-interval of 20 years, the position of the US

that of a beleaguered island in a rising sea of totalitarian despotism . . . When I left Washington early in 1958, security agencies were maintaining surveillance over subversives. Today, the subversives are discrediting security agents. Colonel Rudolph Abel, the Soviet spy, was arrested and convicted then. Today former FBI officials L Patrick Gray, W



CIA: internal protection

Mark Felt and Edward S Miller are under indictment for measures undertaken to track down the terrorist Weathermen."

The decline of the US capacity to protect its internal security is indeed dramatic. In 1958, the US was protected internally by several committees of the Congress, the Subversive Activities Control Board, the Internal Security Division of the Department of Justice, the counter-intelligence departments of the army, navy, air force and coast guard, counter-intelligence departments of law enforcement agencies, including police departments, and of course the FBI and the CIA.

Now, in 1979, the House and Senate internal security committees, the Subversive Activities Control Board and the Internal Security Division of the Justice Department have all been abolished. In addition, writes Morris, "The counter-intelligence departments of the armed

trying to strip the FBI of its intelligence-gathering function and to weaken the role of the CIA."

All of this has not come about because the threat from the Soviet Union has declined. Morris shows the reader in great detail that it has, in fact, increased. He points out, however: "One of the first purposes of a conspiracy is to convince its targets that no conspiracy exists. The misinformation, camouflage and incessant propaganda of the communist apparatus, neatly complemented by the self-deception and gullibility on our own part, have conditioned us to accept with indifference the growth of a menace to our very existence.

"And as this threat, now clear and unmistakable, becomes more proximate and more ominous, a strange response is setting in. Instead of shoring up our defences in the face of such a threat, we are dismantling our ramparts and treating as meddlesome extremists those who would halt that dismantling."

It is Morris's view that the nation's internal security requires the maintenance of an intelligence-gathering organisation that can assess the strength, the motivation and the intentions of every real or potential enemy. The US, he argues, must also maintain a counter-

intelligence force that will preserve it from misinformation from potential enemies, from their penetration of the US apparatus, and from the disloyalty or ineptness of its operatives.

US intelligence has, in recent years, largely failed to understand what the Soviet Union was doing in the world — and what was taking place in such trouble-spots as Iran and Nicaragua. Major-General George Keegan, former head of US Air Force Intelligence, stated that "During the past five years, I have watched at first-hand the culmination of 25 years of consistent underestimates of the Soviet threat . . ."

General Keegan's explanation for this atmosphere is that estimates of Soviet strength have been deliberately understated and falsified at the politicians want to hear.

This grim book should cause its readers much concern. When before in history has a country under concerted attack, discredited its